

Social Identity Theory



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Learning Outcome

Evaluate social identity theory, making reference to relevant studies



Categorization

Social Identity Theory



- What categories do you see in SIS?
- List all the groups you can...
- What “category” - group - do you fit in at SIS? Outside of SIS?
- What similarities within the group are exaggerated?

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- Ingroup (us) vs. Outgroup (them)
 - we are similar out group is 'all the same'
 - We are different from 'them'
- What are some of the consequences of categorizing our school population into different social groups? (examples) How might our school be compared to others?

Social Identity Theory



- How do the group(s) you're in help you maintain positive self-esteem?
- Have you ever left a group or distanced yourself from it because it lowered your self-esteem?

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Social Identity

- based on our knowledge of membership in group(s)
- What is personal identity? How compare to social identity...
 - personal identity associated with perception of interpersonal behaviors
 - Social self associated with intergroup behaviors

Social Comparison



Image from Curve Magazine

Social Identity Theory



- What benefits come from being in a certain group?
- positive distinctiveness
- Do any groups at SIS seem to have more power or prestige than others?

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- category accentuation effect (in vs out group)
- ethnocentrism - ingroup -serving bias (group SSB)
 - +behavior of infroup due to disposition
 - -behavior of in group due to situational
 - +behavior of out group due to situational
 - -behavior of out group due to dispositional



Group Membership = Positive Self-
Esteem

Monday, September 17, 12

- 
- What labels are on your forehead?
 - On what cues did you base your guess?
 - To what extent do people rely on the real world to support how they view themselves?
 - To what extent are people's self-concepts determined by those people around them?

SIT

- Henri Tajfel - SIT
- Relevant studies -
 - minimal group paradigm--
 - most studies support SIT
 -

Strengths - Limitations

- supported by 100s of studies - has expanded over years - generates lots of research
- demonstrates crucial role of social categorization in ingroup behavior
- made distinction - personal identity & social identity - explores basic need to belong affects social interaction
- SIT a basis for explaining stereotype and stereotyping, explanations of groupthink, conformity... helps explain intergroup conflict when there is no realistic basis for competition
- Limitations -
- self-esteem hypothesis no longer as central to SIT as research shows SE associated to out-group discrimination may not be long lasting
- SIT favors situational explanations over dispositional ones.. There is some evidence suggesting that individual differences do affect SIT process -Platow et al 1990 found that competitive participants had greater in group favoritism than cooperative

SCLOA

- LO - Evaluate Social Identity theory -making reference to relevant studies
 - How do handle this question?
- Henri Tajfel - SIT
 - C Horwarth
 - Adler

Explain the formation of stereotypes and their effect on behavior.

Stereotype

- Aronson 2007 - Stereotypes are evaluative generalizations about a group of people.. similar characteristics are assigned to all group members
- Many psychologists view stereotypes as schemas (Augoustinos et al 2007)
- How formed? Social-cognitive theories, SIT, systems-justification theory & social representation theory

Social-cognitive theories & Stereotype

- Since our capacity to process information is limited a need to simplify our social world, to avoid info overload, the categories used in social categorization are stereotypes
- **Stereotypes are schemas** & have characteristics:
 - Energy saving devices
 - They can be automatically activated
 - stable and resistant to change
 - they affect behavior
- **Cohen 1981 - stereotype and memory**
 - (wife librarian or waitress?)
- **Fiske & Dyer 1985** - begins with learning isolated parts of stereotype
- **Illusory correlation** - negative stereotypes of minority groups seem to be based in this... see study

SIT theories and stereotype

- based on category accentuation and positive distinctness
- Sherman et al 2009 - pay more attention to in - out group members that maximize positive distinctness -- bias influenced by ethnocentric way of we attribute positive and negative behavior of in-out group members (example)

Compare SIT & schema perspective

- Both based on social categorization as basis
- Differences:
 - SC simplifies social perception - SIT enriches social perception.. Even minimal group experiments - participants try to make sense of group categories and elaborate on ingroup-outgroup
 - CS views stereotyping more negatively, SIT don't think stereotypes have a negative bias on social perception or that seeing humans as individuals is more accurate than seeing them as members of groups
 - CS - schemas are fixed -- SIT stereotypes are flexible and contextual (Some researchers view schemas as flexible too)
 - (Haslam & Turner 1992)

- To what extent do you agree with the SIT view that viewing persons as individuals is not necessarily more accurate than perceiving them as members of a stereotype group?

Systems-justification theory and the social representation theory

- Must look at greater collective societal influence on stereotype formation
- Jost & Banaji's 1994 -- SJT - stereotypes used to justify social and power relations in society
 - rich vs poor.... powerful / powerless
- SJT claims SC and SIT cannot explain **negative self stereotyping**
 - how disadvantaged groups tend to internalize negative stereotypes
- *In what ways does negative stereotyping pose problems for social-cognitive and SIT explanations of stereotypes?*

social representation theory

- SRT of Moscovici (1984) - social representations are shared beliefs of the society or group we belong
- Come from the cultural and social life of individuals
 - Mosc argues - when we classify - we are making an evaluation....
- Mosc argues that biases come from social representations which reflect dominant preconceptions shared by extensive social groups... *How would SC explain biases?*
- *Most recent work focuses on process of stereotyping rather than content --- this separates stereotyping from prejudice/discrimination*

- **Stereotype threat effect** - performance impairment when individual asked to do a task are made aware of the negative stereotype regarding their group's ability to perform the task....
- Spencer et al 1999 - girls and math
- Steele & Aronson 1995 - African Americans and verbal test
- Osborne 2001 - this effect might be due to increased anxiety

Conclusions

- How do the theories of stereotype formation work together? Inform each other? What do they tell us about the effects of stereotypes on behavior?

List all the examples of the effects of stereotypes on behavior mentioned

Note that the term *behavior* includes overt behavior as well as cognitive functioning (attention, perception, memory, etc..)

Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination



Stereotype:

- Overgeneralized idea about a group of people.

Prejudice:

- Undeserved (usually negative) attitude towards a group of people. **Ethnocentrism** is an example of a prejudice.

Discrimination:

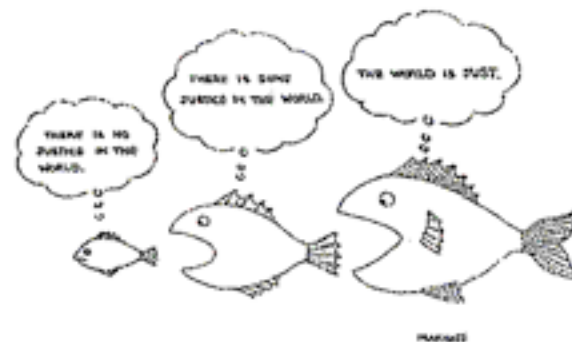
- An action based on a prejudice.



How does prejudice occur?

Just world Phenomenon

- In one popular study female and male subjects were told two versions of a story about an interaction between a woman and a man. Both variations were exactly the same, except at the very end the man raped the woman in one and in the other he proposed marriage.
- In both conditions, both female and male subjects viewed the woman's (identical) actions as inevitably leading to the (very different) results.



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In-Group versus Out-Groups.

- In-Group Bias

Scapegoat Theory

